



OCT 30 2013

United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor
State of California
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

Thank you for the letter of May 28, 2013, signed by Mark S. Ghilarducci, Secretary of the California Emergency Management Agency, requesting disaster designations for all eligible California counties, due to losses caused by drought in 2013.

Between February 27 and August 21, 2013, I designated 57 California counties as primary natural disaster areas, due to a recent drought, in accordance with 7 CFR 759.5(a). According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (see <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>), those counties suffered from a drought intensity value during the growing season of: (1) D2 (Drought-Severe) for 8 or more consecutive weeks; or (2) D3 (Drought-Extreme) or D4 (Drought-Exceptional).

Consequently, all California counties, except San Francisco County have been named as primary natural disaster areas.

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, San Francisco County was named as a contiguous disaster county.

A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans. Farmers in eligible counties have 8 months from the date of a Secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loans. FSA considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses on the farm, and the security and repayment ability of the operator.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tom J. Vilsack", is positioned above the printed name and title of the Secretary.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary